

Testimony of

Adrianna Accioly

Student Teacher

Before the

Education Committee

March 15, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

I testify today in support of House Bill 6884. This bill takes important steps toward addressing the educator shortage in Connecticut, showing educators that theirs is a respected profession, and ensuring that our classrooms and schools can provide the best possible education for our students.

Hi, I am Adrianna Accioly, a student teacher at the Middle School of Plainville. Since starting student teaching, I've had to work 40+ hours in the classroom to meet all of the student teaching requirements for my evaluation. On top of this, I am putting in additional hours to complete edTPA, an extremely stressful assessment. I am constantly worried and second guessing being a teacher. I am worried about my financial situation: I am an independent 21 year old, meaning I have to provide for myself. Since I provide for myself, I've tried extremely hard to work extra over the summer and take out loans. Now, I still have to work at least 15 hours a week to get by. Student teaching and work alone is above 55 hours, more than a typical full time job. When doing the math, I am working more than 2 full time jobs to get my degree. I cry often and my only motivation for completing my teaching degree is seeing the students succeed. Without edTPA, I could make my lessons way better than what they currently are. EdTPA is especially stressful because I feel that I have to be perfect, although I am a STUDENT-teacher eager to learn since I am NOT getting paid to be a full time teacher. Since I am student teaching, I have taken full control of the class, grades and assessments. I normally do not eat lunch because lunch takes away from planning and getting my requirements done for edTPA. Since student teaching, I've lost a lot of weight from my lack of eating. I feel that if I eat for a normal period of time or go out with friends, I risk losing my degree. If being a teacher requires 60+ hours of work every week, I am not sure if I am capable of this work. I am only on my 8th week and I am extremely burnt out from 80+ hours of student teaching, homework, edTPA, and work. As a student in financial need, I feel the state is constantly trying to weave me out by the

added costs, edTPA, and paying a ridiculous amount of money to work for free. I have witnessed teachers use their lunch to cover and I've witnessed teachers burn-out. I feel that edTPA forgets about one important factor: we are human. I feel like a robot filling in the edTPA requirements because I never get a break from work. I had to attend meetings, school, and work on hw/edTPA even when a student at the school I am student teaching at passed away. I saw all my classes break down in tears and never thought I would have to answer 'are you going to his funeral' to 12 and 13 year olds. This is the stuff we aren't taught in college up until student teaching arrives: suicide does happen in school, we have to submit edTPA, we cannot make any errors, and we must prepare to work well beyond 40 hours. Professors always told me to allow my students to make mistakes, however if I make a minor mistake on content, it will prevent me from obtaining my degree. It's ridiculous to ask a student teacher to not make a mistake in content when we are forced to work an absurd amount of hours. I am a student of Central Connecticut State University.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

